

Eastern suburbs workers back-paid \$274,000

2 March 2012

Workers in Melbourne's eastern suburbs have been back-paid a total of \$274,800 following recent intervention by the Fair Work Ombudsman.

The largest recovery was \$38,500 for an IT professional in Mount Waverley who had not been paid wages for several months' work.

After a Fair Work inspector contacted the business and explained its obligations, the male employee was promptly reimbursed all money owed without the need for further action against the employer.

In a separate case, 33 young workers at a Doncaster business have been back-paid \$32,500 after the Fair Work Ombudsman randomly audited the company and found the workers were inadvertently underpaid overtime rates.

The underpayments ranged from \$18 to \$3763 and occurred between July, 2010 and June, 2011.

Other recent recoveries include:

- \$25,400 for 13 retail assistants in Hawthorn underpaid the minimum hourly rate and weekend penalty rates,
- \$24,100 for three IT workers in Camberwell underpaid redundancy entitlements,
- \$24,100 for a Doncaster real estate agent underpaid the minimum hourly rate and not paid for all hours worked,
- \$23,800 for a Rowville IT professional underpaid redundancy entitlements,
- \$23,700 for a communications professional in Prahran not paid wages, annual leave or superannuation entitlements,
- \$13,300 for three Doncaster East retail assistants underpaid the minimum hourly rate and weekend penalty rates,
- \$13,000 for two Clifton Hill kitchen workers underpaid the minimum hourly rate, penalty rates, allowances and annual leave entitlements,
- \$12,500 for a Bayswater repairman not paid wages in lieu of notice and redundancy entitlements,
- \$10,600 for a manager at a Mount Waverley business not paid accrued annual leave entitlements,
- \$8900 for an apprentice in Heathmont underpaid the minimum hourly rate, allowances and penalty rates for three years,
- \$8100 for a Mount Waverley childcare worker underpaid the minimum hourly rate,
- \$5700 for Bulleen site manager underpaid termination entitlements,
- \$5500 for an apprentice carpenter in Bayswater underpaid the minimum hourly rate, and
- \$5100 for personal assistant in Chadstone underpaid long service leave entitlements on termination.

The Fair Work Ombudsman recovered a total of \$7.573 million back-pay for 3556 underpaid workers in Victoria last financial year.

Nationally, between July 1, 2009 and December 31, 2011 the Agency recovered a total of \$68.2 million for 41,224 underpaid workers.

Fair Work Ombudsman Nicholas Wilson says that when Fair Work inspectors identify a problem and contact a business, most employers check their records, realise a problem has occurred, and fix it immediately.

"It's a fact that some businesses inadvertently breach workplace laws. When we find mistakes, we're here to assist and give practical advice to employers on how to voluntarily fix them," says Mr Wilson.

"These Eastern suburbs businesses have now corrected the errors that led to the underpayments and put processes in place to ensure they will not happen again."

Mr Wilson says the Fair Work Ombudsman's Assisted Voluntary Resolution team is now achieving resolution of about half its referrals with the first month.

The Fair Work Ombudsman provides a single point of contact for people working or running a business in Australia to get accurate and timely information about their workplace rights and obligations.

Workers or employers seeking support should get in touch with the Fair Work Ombudsman via the website - www.fairwork.gov.au - or call the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94. A free interpreter service is available on 13 14 50.

Free documentation is available Online for employers to use when hiring, managing and dismissing staff, including letters of

engagement and probation, timesheet and pay slip templates, leave application forms, a self-audit check list and workplace complaint form.

The website has a number of tools and resources, including PayCheck Plus and an Award Finder, to assist business-owners to calculate the correct pay for their employees.

An 'Industries' section on the website provides extra, specialised information for employers and employees in the retail, cleaning, clerical, hair and beauty, security, horticulture, fast food, hospitality and vehicle industries.

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Contact us

Fair Work Online: www.fairwork.gov.au

Fair Work Infoline: 13 13 94

Need language help?

Contact the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on 13 14 50

Hearing & speech assistance

Call through the National Relay Service (NRS):

For TTY: 13 36 77. Ask for the Fair Work Infoline 13 13 94

Speak & Listen: 1300 555 727. Ask for the Fair Work Infoline 13 13 94

The Fair Work Ombudsman is committed to providing advice that you can rely on. The information contained on this website is general in nature. If you are unsure about how it applies to your situation you can call our Infoline on 13 13 94 or speak with a union, industry association or workplace relations professional. Visitors are warned that this site may inadvertently contain names or pictures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who have recently died.